

Message Text

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ACTION EA-13

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ADP-00 RSR-01 RSC-01 NSC-10 NSCE-00

INRE-00 USIE-00 PRS-01 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 DODE-00

DPW-01 IO-02 PM-03 EUR-10 ACDA-10 SSO-00 L-02 /079 W

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O R 271118Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6462

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMCONSUL CAN THO

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMCONSUL DANANG

USDEL JEC PARIS

USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL NHA TRANG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

CDR USSAG NKP RTAFB IMMEDIATE

COMUSMACTHAI

DAO SAIGON/AOSOP-OR

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PINS, MILI, VS

SUBJECT: VIET-NAM CEASE-FIRE WEEKLY ASSESSMENT, AUGUST 20 -

26, 1973

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

1. SUMMARY. MR 3 WAS THE EXCEPTION IN REPORTING A DECREASE IN MILITARY ACTIVITY: CEASE FIRE VIOLATIONS WERE UP AGAIN IN MR 1, THE HIGH LEVEL OF ACTIVITY PERSISTED IN MR 2, AND IN MR 4 INCIDENTS INCREASED IN NUMBER BUT SUBSIDED IN INTENSITY. NEW ARVN TACTICS AT TRUNG NGHAI APPEAR PROMISING, AND MAY EVENTUALLY BREAK THE BLOODY STALEMATE. THERE WERE VERY FEW ENEMY ATTEMPTS TO INTERFERE WITH THE HEAVY VOTER TURNOUT IN SUNDAY'S SENATORIAL ELECTIONS. INDONESIANS REMAIN FIRM AGAINST COMMUNIST DELEGATIONS' EFFORTS TO UNDERMINE ICCS PRESENCE IN THE DELTA. THERE WAS NO SUBSTANTIVE PROGRESS IN EITHER FPJMT OR TPJMC.

2. FPJMT. OUR EFFORTS IN THE FPJMT TO INDUCE THE OTHER SIDE TO IMPLEMENT ARTICLE 8B OF THE CEASEFIRE AGREEMENT CONTINUE TO BE UNSUCCESSFUL. DURING THE WEEK, THE DRV AND PRG DELEGATIONS ON FOUR OCCASIONS SOUGHT U.S. INTERCESSION WITH THE GVN TO SECURE RELEASE OF CIVILIAN DETAINEES IN RETURN FOR INFORMATION ON U.S. MIA AND REPATRIATION OF THOSE WHO DIED IN CAPTIVITY. THE USDEL RESPONSE HAS BEEN THAT THERE IS NO LINKAGE BETWEEN THESE TWO MATTERS. THE JCRC OFF-SHORE CASUALTY RESOLUTION OPERATION IN THE HUE-DANANG AREA HAS BEEN EXTENDED AT LEAST THROUGH SEPTEMBER 1, AS DIVERS CONTINUE TO RECOVER PIECES OF AN AIRCRAFT OF INTEREST TO JCRC.

3. TPJMC. A ROUTINE AGENDA HAS EVOLVED THAT IS THE SAME AT EACH MEETING OF THE CHIEF OF DELEGATION: THE RETURN OF PRISONERS, THE DEPLOYMENT OF THE PRG DELEGATION, AND THE ENFORCEMENT OF THE CEASEFIRE. AT MEETINGS WHERE THE PRG DELEGATION SPEAKS FIRST, THE PRISONER ISSUE HEADS THE AGENDA; WHEN THE GVN DELEGATION SPEAKS FIRST, THE AGENDA STARTS WITH THE CEASEFIRE ISSUE. REGARDLESS OF THE ORDER OF THE AGENDA, NO PROGRESS WAS REPORTED IN EITHER THE CHIEF'S MEETING OR THE SUB-COMMISSION MEETING LAST WEEK. THE PRG DID PROPOSE LIAISON FLIGHTS TO PICK UP CADRE IN TRUCE REGIONS II, III, IV AND CONFIDENTIAL

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VII ON AUGUST 20. THE GVN ACCEPTED THE PROPOSAL, BUT THE PRG CANCELLED AT THE LAST MINUTE.

4. THE GVN DELEGATION HAS DECIDED NOT TO RESPOND TO ANY PROPAGANDA STATEMENTS BY THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PRG DELEGATION IN TPJMC MEETINGS. A GVNDL STAFF OFFICER SAID THAT THE NEW TACTIC WAS FIRST APPLIED IN THE MEETING OF AUGUST 17. THE PRG SIDE SPOKE FIRST, LAUNCHING INTO A LONG DIATRIBE ON THE GVN SUPPRESSION OF "SINCERE PATRIOTS", I.E., NLF CADRE, AND THE LACK OF GOOD FAITH ON THE PART OF THE GVN IN THE PROGRAM TO RETURN PRISONERS TO THE COMMUNISTS. THE GVN DELEGATION IGNORED THE DIATRIBE AND ADDRESSED ONLY THE SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES. THE GVNDL OFFICER SAID THE COMMUNISTS WERE SURPRISED AND "SOMEWHAT DISTRUBED" BY THE LACK OF RESPONSE

FROM THE GVN DELEGATION, THE GVNDL HOPES WITH THIS NEW TACTIC TO INDUCE THE PRG TO FOREGO LONG POLEMICAL POLITICAL SPEECHES.

5. DURING THE AUGUST 24 MEETING, BG PHAN HOA HIEP, DEPUTY GVNDL CHIEF, LECTURED THE PRG DELEGATION ON THE ERROR OF THINKING THAT "THERE ARE TWO COUNTRIES, TWO GOVERNMENTS, TWO ARMED FORCES AND THREE POLITICAL ELEMENTS IN SOUTH VIETNAM." HE POINTED OUT THAT FOUR "PARTIES" HAD SIGNED THE PARIS AGREEMENT, NOT FOUR "GOVERNMENTS."

6. THE AVERAGE NUMBER OF DAILY REPORTED CEASEFIRE VIOLATIONS IN I CORPS DURING THE PAST WEEK ROSE FROM NINE TO THIRTEEN. THUA THIEN CONTINUED TO SUFFER FROM ENEMY ACTION DIRECTED PARTICULARLY AGAINST ROAD BUILDING AND RESUPPLY EFFORTS ON BACH MA MOUNTAIN, THE GVN WAS PROVOKED INTO AIRSTRIKES AGAINST ENEMY ANTI-AIRCRAFT EMPLACEMENTS. AFTER THE ATTACK THE ENEMY APPEALED FOR AN END TO THE STRIKES IN RETURN FOR ENDING THEIR HARASSMENT OF RESUPPLY HELIOPHTERS. THE AREA WAS QUIET FOR 24 HOURS UNTIL AUGUST 24, WHEN A SMALL OUTPOST NORTHEAST OF BACH MA RECEIVED THIRTY ROUNDS OF FIRE WHICH WOUNDED TWELVE MEN. IN QUANG NGAI THE MILITARY SITUATION REMAINS THE SAME AS REPORTED LAST WEEK, WITH THE NUMBER OF INCIDENTS CONTINUING TO DECLINE GRADUALLY.

7. DURING THE PAST WEEK, THE HIGH LEVEL OF MILITARY ACTIVITY CHARACTERISTIC OF MOST OF AUGUST HAS BEEN SUSTAINED. THE PATTERN OF CONFLICT IN BINH DINH AND KONTUM-WHERE MOST OF THE FIGHTING TAKES PLACE -- WILL LIKELY CONTINUE TO PRODUCE ENGAGEMENTS
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AND CASUALTIES. IN BINH DINH, AGGRESSIVE GVN CLEARING OPERATIONS CONTINUE, WITH MORE PLANNED. THE 3RD VNA DEVISION, WHICH WE UNDERSTAND HAS BEEN UNDER STREIGHT, IS BEING REINFORCED, AND THIS MAY STIFFEN THEIR RESISTANCE TO RVNAF OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS. IN KONTIM, THE NEW STRATEGY TO RETAKE TRUNG NGHIA AND POLEI KRONG (SAIGON 15353) IS MORE PROMISING THAN THE OLD BUT IS LIKELY TO BE VIGOROUSLY OPPOSED, AND IT PROBABLY WILL BE SEVERAL WEEKS BEFORE MAJOR RESULTS CAN BE EXPECTED. THE ENEMY REMAINS IN AN ADVANTAGEOUS POSITION, ABLE TO ROTATE AND RESUPPLY ITS UNITS AT THE FRONT WITH IMPUNITY. THUS, WHILE WE DO NOT BELIEVE THESE HOSTILITIES ARE READY TO ESCALATE SHARPLY, THHEY ARE LIKELY TO CONTINUE AT A HIGH LEVEL FOR SOME TIME TO COME.

8. THE WAR COOLED NOTICEABLY IN MR 3 DURING THE WEEK ENDING AT 0800 AUGUST 27, WITH 99 INCIDENTS REPORTED AS COMPARED WITH 114 THE PREVIOUS WEEK. THERE WERE NO SIGNIFICANT NEW INITIATIVES BY EITHER SIDE, AND THE INCIDENTS REPORTED WERE ON BALANCE MINOR AND SCATTERED THROUGHOUT THE REGION. LOSSES ON BOTH SIDES WERE CORRESPONDINGLY LOW: GVN -- 11 KIA AND 88 WIA; VC/NVA -- 26 KIA AND FOUR CAPTURED, WITH 10 RALLIERS. REPORTED ENEMY INTENTIONS TO INTERFERE WITH THE SENATE ELECTIONS FAILED TO MATERI-ALIZE. A SUCCESSFUL AERIAL RESUPPLY MISSION WAS EXECUTED AT TONG LE

CHAN ON AUGUST 23,

9. THE DECLINE IN ACTIVITY THAT HAD CONTINUED INTO THE BEGINNING OF THE WEEK IN MR 4 WAS REVERSED, AND THE DELTA RECORDED A SLIGHT INCREASE IN INCIDENTS FOR THE PERIOD ENDING AUGUST 26. INCIDENTS CONTINUED TO BE CONCENTRATED IN DINH TUONG, WHERE ENEMY ACTIVITY KEEPS

THE SITUATION FLUID AND MAINTAINS PRESSURE AGAINST GVN OUTPOSTS DESPITE A DECLINE IN THE INTENSITY OF THE FIGHTING. ELSEWHERE, THE TIDE EBBS AND FLOWS, AS BOTH SIDES CLAIM THEIR SHARE OF VICTORIES FROM EACH WEEK'S SIGNIFICANT SCRAPS. GVN CASUALTIES WERE SLIGHTLY LOWER AT 116 KILLED, 577 WOUNDED AND 24 MISSING, WHILE REPORTED VC/NVA LOSSES ROSE 30 PERCENT -- TO 459 KILLED AND SEVEN CAPTURED.
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